THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, 28th November 1923.

The House met at 11 o'clock, the President (the hon. Diwan Bahadur Sir P. Rajagopala Achariyar, K.C.S.I., C.I.E.) in the chair.

I

NEW MEMBERS.

The following Members were sworn in :—

(1) Mr. Bradford Leslie.

(2) Mr. J. L. P. Roche Victoria.

II

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR REGARDING THE CONSTITUTION OF THE MINISTRY.

The House then resumed the discussion on the above motion.

Dr. P. Subbarayan :—" Mr. President, when the results of the general election were known, I thought that I would generally support the Ministry, but since then circumstances have altered and after what the hon. the Leader of the Party said yesterday in reply to my hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University that political prisoners were dacoits and robbers and deserved to be treated as such, I must say I have considerably altered my views for the simple reason that political prisoners are prisoners because of their conscience. Putting it personally a time may come when I myself may, on a matter of conscience, go to prison. I think it inhuman that a person who is prepared to sacrifice himself for the sake of what he thinks is the interests of his country should be treated as a dacoit. I must enter my emphatic protest against such a sentiment."

The hon. the President :—" Which hon. Member called you a dacoit or robber ? "

Dr. P. Subbarayan :—" I did not say that I was called a dacoit or robber, but I simply said a time might come when as a matter of conscience I might go to prison as a political prisoner and be treated like a dacoit or robber. If it is said that political prisoners should be condemned to the penalties that are due to robbers and dacoits, then I must vote for the motion merely because of such sentiments being expressed by the Leader of the Party.

" When the Justice Party came into power last time, its leaders, though they had won leadership outside, had still to win it inside the House, and I thought that time would teach them lessons which would go considerably towards giving them the political experience which they needed ; but I find I have been sadly mistaken. Mr. President, in my opinion, all this trouble would not have arisen if it was not for the dual leadership as has existed during the last three years, one man leading the party and another man being the Chief Minister. This experiment was tried in England and proved a failure. During the war, Mr. Lloyd George was the Prime Minister, and Mr. Bonar Law the Leader of the House of Commons, and the